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Xyelid rearing techniques based on 1960-1961 rearing from a Pinus elliottii collection

By

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Xyelid larvae were collected from male strobili which were either starting to shed pollen or were nearly ready to. Larvae dropped from the strobili onto kraft paper trays, pollen was screened out of the larvae by using 32-mesh saran fabric which held the larvae back if done rapidly. Larvae were then put onto a folded sheet of paper and counted as they dropped out of the fold onto filter paper in petri dishes in lots of 100 larvae. They then were sprinkled onto the soil surface of 8-inch-diameter clay pots filled with sandy soil. The pots were then sunk into the ground to the pot-soil line in a location with well-drained soil. The pot drain-hole had been covered with saran fabric and the top of the pot was also covered with this plastic material held by a metal band and bolt.

Of 16 such pots, each with 100 larvae, overall emergence of xyelid adults was 5 percent, ranging from 0 to 23 percent. An additional 4 percent of the larvae yielded adult parasites.

Quite possibly a coarser material such as builder's sand (or gravel) in the pot bottoms might have been advisable since in several heavy rains the pots collected water soon after being set up. Two additional pots of the same lot, put in a poorly drained spot for comparison, yielded no adults at all indicating that the larvae did not tolerate water-logged soil. On the other hand too dry conditions, for example pots in full sun, might not do well either since the larvae desiccate rapidly and die if left in collecting trays much over a single day in the insectory.

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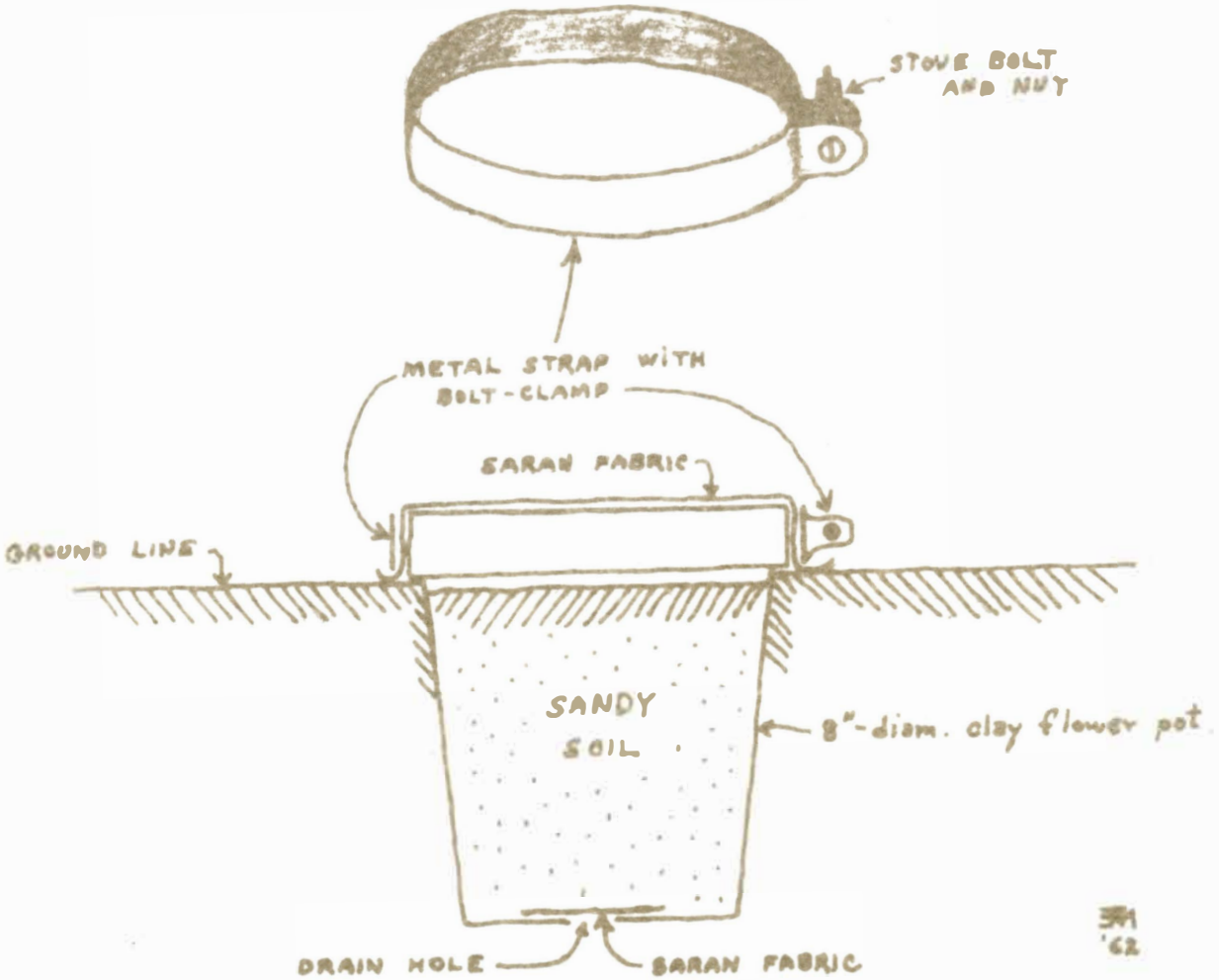

XYELIDAE REARING CONTAINER